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REMARKS

We trust that the Examiner will now find the application to be in condition for allowance and reconsideration is respectfully requested. Claim 1 has been amended in response to the Examiner's objections. A marked-up version of the amended claim is included in a section attached hereto. In the marked-up claim, the words in brackets are being removed and the underlined words are being added, which places the amended claim into the form given above. The attached section is captioned VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE.

In the Office Action, claims 1-5 and 11 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Cetrelli (U.S. Patent No. 4,284,293) in view of the allegedly admitted prior art. In response, claim 1 has been amended to recite a method of drawing the web component through said nip formed between the cutter and the anvil means, thereby forming a vent aperture in the web component. As further recited in amended claim 1 and as shown in Figure 2, the vent aperture is formed in a direction different from the direction in which the cutter accepts the web component.

By repeating the steps of forming separate vent apertures in the web component, a line of vent apertures is clearly formed in a direction different from the direction of each vent aperture. When the web component is formed as part of a plastic bag, the individual vent apertures ventilate the interior of the plastic bag. Additionally, the direction of each vent aperture in relation to the direction of the line of vent apertures makes the line of vent apertures tear-resistant.

The Office Action states that the Cetrelli reference has apertures that may be formed for ventilation purposes. As explained in a previous response for the above application (filed on May 6, 2002) the Cetrelli reference teaches away from the ventilation of the interior of the package. In regard to the holes of the cited reference, the holes are not shown in any of the figures nor are the holes described other than being an additional component of the package. The holes are an additional component of the package because the ducts 7 are originally grooved into the edge area 12 which faces the edge area 11. (Col. 3, lines 52-55) The reference states that the ducts may be given a different shape and that it is conceivable to give the ducts the form of a series of holes which penetrate through the outside edge area

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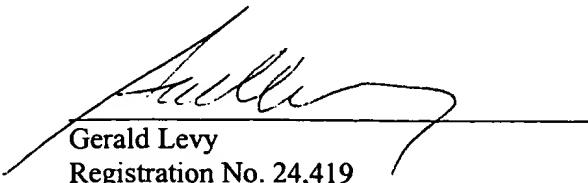
11 in front of the space 15. (Col. 4, lines 43-46). As such, the reference suggests that holes are formed by penetrating the edge area 11 with ducts on the edge area 12 underneath the holes and with the ducts formed to the shape of the holes. The holes are not formed to the shape of the ducts.

A shape of the ducts, which is not the shape of the holes and would not include the holes in edge 11, is preferred for the packing material. (Col. 4, lines 46-51) As such, there is no indication that the holes are given a form or specifically given the form of the ducts. Additionally, the Cetrelli reference does not provide any method for forming the holes and specifically does not provide any direction to the holes in the edge 11. Contrary to the cited reference, amended claim 1 of the present application clearly provides a forming step for the vent apertures and a direction to the vent apertures such that the line of vent apertures satisfactorily ventilates the interior of the plastic bag without weakening the packing material.  
*not in claim*

As stated above, any holes penetrating the edge 11 still require facing ducts 7 in the edge 12. This arrangement conceivably provides a form of ventilation required for sealing. Since the laminate would be constructed with a line of holes penetrating one edge 11 and a line of ducts on the opposing edge 12, two lines are required for ventilation of the sealing area. The combination of the lines may weaken the package. (Col. 4, lines 46-51) As a result, amended claim 1 of the present application, which provides one tear-resistant line of vent apertures to adequately ventilate the interior of a plastic bag, would not be obvious to one skilled in the art in view of the cited reference and the allegedly admitted prior art. Claims 2-5 and 11, which depend on amended claim 1, would also not be obvious in view of the Cetrelli reference and the allegedly admitted prior art.

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that the claims as herein are patentably distinguishable over the prior art and the application is now believed to be in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

1. (Amended for a ~~first~~ time) A method for providing vent apertures to a web component of a plastic bag, comprising the steps of:

providing a cutter which [cuts a line of vent apertures along ] accepts the web component in a first direction [, said vent apertures being oriented in a second direction which is not parallel to said first direction];

providing an anvil means against which said cutter bears, thereby creating a nip; [and]  
drawing the web component through said nip formed between said cutter and said anvil means  
thereby forming [said line of vent apertures] a vent aperture in the web component in a second direction  
which is not parallel to said first direction; and

repeating said steps to form a line of vent apertures in the web component in said first direction.

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